

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claim 1 was amended to introduce the limitation that the second lid is “slidably translatable longitudinally.” New claims 34-39 were introduced. The addition of “new matter” has been scrupulously avoided.

New claims 34-38 were introduced to recite the invention where the storage box includes a hinge assembly that permits “more than 180 degrees of rotation of the first lid”. The basis for this aspect of the invention can be found throughout the present application, but is most clearly illustrated in Figures 7 and 11.

New claim 39 corresponds to allowed claim 24 rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the claims from which previously claim 24 depended. Claim 24 was cancelled.

Claims 1, 3-10, and 21-23, 25-39 are now pending in this application.

1. Response to Anticipation Rejections

In paragraphs 2 through 16 on pages 2 through 5 of the Action, the Patent Office rejected claims 1, 3-9, 21-23, 25-31, and 33 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 676,127 of Fox [herein “Fox”]. The Applicant believes that the above amendment to claim 1 clearly distinguishes the claimed invention from Fox. For example, the Applicant submits that Fox does not disclose at least one second lid that is “slidably translatable longitudinally along the open top of the enclosure between the first lid and the third lid” [Emphasis added.], as recited in amended claim 1.

As noted by the Patent Office, Fox discloses a “kitchen table” having hinged covers C and D and a “table top” E mounted to the body A of the table. As described in Fox, table top E is mounted on cleats e whereby table top E can cover covers C and D. However, contrary to the invention recited in amended claim 1, table top E does not slide longitudinally between lids, but transversely over lids C and D. That is, according

to aspects of the invention, for example, as shown in Figure 6, second lid 18 is translatable longitudinally, or lengthwise, along the top of box 10. The Applicant submits that not only does Fox not anticipate the invention recited in claim 1, but there is no teaching or suggestion in Fox that the table of Fox can or could be modified whereby table top E could be slidably mounted in a longitudinal direction. The Applicant respectfully requests that these rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn.

With respect to new claims 34-38, the Applicant submits that the location and structure of the hinge assembly of Fox does not allow covers C and D of Fox to rotate more than 180 degrees. Therefore, the aspects of the invention recited in claims 34-38 are not anticipated by Fox. Furthermore, the rotations of covers C and D are intentionally limited. Though no specific information is provided in Fox of the structure of the hinges used, Fox states at 1:47-52:

These covers [C and D] are hinged to the bed some distance from the end of the table in such a manner that when they are opened they extend out beyond the end of the table and are supported on that part of the bed between the hinges of the covers and the end of the Table. [Emphasis added.]

Thus, according to Fox, the rotation of covers C and D are intentionally limited to 180 degrees.

Moreover, the Applicant submits that the typical hinge mounting of covers C and D cannot be adapted to provide more than 180 degree rotation as claimed. For example, a typical hinge as employed by Fox is physically limited to about 180 degrees of maximum rotation. Contrary to the hinge assembly of the present invention, the physical limitations of the hinge prevent further rotation.

For these reasons, the aspect of the invention recited in claims 34-38 are not anticipated by Fox, nor obvious in view of Fox.

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2. Allowable Subject Matter

As noted in paragraph 21 on page 7 of the Action, the subject matter of claim 24 is allowable if rewritten in independent form. New claim 39 corresponds to allowed claim 24 rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the claims from which previous claim 24 depended.

3. Conclusions

The Applicant believes that the above Amendment and Remarks overcome the rejections of the subject Office Action and place the application in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action on the merits of the application is requested.

If a telephone conference would be of assistance in advancing prosecution of the subject application, the Applicant's undersigned Agent invites the Examiner to telephone him at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,



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